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## SURGICAL GLOVE PACKAGE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 206—63.2)

This invention relates to a package for surgical latex gloves and more particularly it pertains to a package in which the gloves may be retained for autoclaving and subsequently maintained in a sterile condition until use.

Inasmuch as sanitary standards prevent the use of gloves which have become unsterile due to contact with persons or objects, there is a problem inherent in the handling of surgical glove packages during and after sterilization. Most prior surgical glove packages have been inadequate because they were not conducive to adherence to sanitary standards when opening the package for use. Either the package was difficult to open and therefore was subject to contamination as a result of awkward handling; or the package was composed of a wrapper of insufficient size to prevent contamination under normal handling conditions. Where the package wrapper does not have a large enough surface area when opened, it is not convenient for an assistant to hold the glove to prevent contact with non-sterile objects preliminary to being put on.

The device of the present invention provides a surgical glove package in which the glove is contained within an inner wrapper which in turn is contained within an outer wrapper. Both wrappers are folded along readily discernible fold lines. In addition, both wrappers have large surfaces which are conducive to non-contamination because the package can be placed upon a non-sterile table surface and as it is opened by unfolding, the outer wrapper overlies a sufficiently large area to assure a completely sterile marginal area around the inner wrapper of the package.

By providing an inner wrapper, contamination of the gloves is further avoided by persons opening the package due to inadvertences and human error. After the outer wrapper is fully opened, the inner wrapper may be thereafter opened with assurance that the area surrounding it is completely sterile.

Moreover, the surgical glove package of the present invention includes inner and outer wrappers which are composed of a steam pervious material, such as paper, in which the gloves are disposed in such a manner that the package is preferably placed on edge in an autoclave to permit steam to pass upwardly between oppositely disposed gloves.

Accordingly, it is a general object of this invention to provide an improved package for surgical latex gloves adapted to receive and maintain the gloves in the desired position for ready use when the package is opened.

It is another object of this invention to provide a package for surgical latex gloves in which the gloves may be maintained, autoclaved, and subsequently retained in sterile condition until opened for use.

It is another object of this invention to provide a package for surgical gloves, which package includes inner and outer wrappers to facilitate the sterile handling of the gloves near non-sterile objects when the package is opened.

It is another object of this invention to provide a readily openable package for surgical gloves which permits a minimum of handling by an inner wrapper after an outer wrapper is opened.

Finally, it is an object of this invention to provide a novel and improved package for surgical latex gloves which is economical to manufacture and is conducive to

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a maximum of sterile conditions during opening of the package.

These and other objects and advantages apparent to those skilled in the art from the following description and claim may be obtained, the stated results achieved, and the described difficulties overcome by the discoveries, principles, apparatus, parts, elements, combinations, and subcombinations which comprise the present invention, the nature of which is set forth in the following general statement, preferred embodiments of which—illustrative of the best modes in which applicant has contemplated applying the principles—are set forth in the following description and shown in the drawings, and which are particularly and distinctly pointed out and set forth in the appended claim forming part hereof.

The improved package for surgical gloves of the present invention may be stated in general terms as including an inner rectangular wrapper and an outer rectangular wrapper, the inner wrapper being substantially longer than it is wide and being divided by three spaced transverse fold lines into four panels including a pair of inner adjacent panels and two end panels, the outer wrapper being larger than the inner wrapper and being divided into three adjacent panels by fold lines extending between adjacent sides of the wrappers, the four panels of the inner wrapper and the three panels of the outer wrapper being of substantially equal size, the panels of the inner wrapper when folded being aligned with the panels of the outer wrapper when folded, and the outer wrapper being folded along its fold lines around and enclosing all panel edges and surfaces of the inner folded wrapper when the package is completely closed.

In the drawings in which the invention is shown by way of example:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a completely open package of surgical gloves with inner and outer wrappers superimposed and with a pair of rubber gloves in place on the inner wrapper;

FIG. 2 is a top plan view showing the position of the gloves within the inner wrapper after the first folding operation;

FIG. 3 is a plan view of the gloves within the inner wrapper after the second folding operation;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the package showing the first fold of the outer wrapper;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view showing subsequent folds of the outer wrapper;

FIG. 6 is a plan view of the folded package subsequent to that shown in FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the completely closed package;

FIG. 8 is a plan view of another embodiment of the package as shown in FIG. 5; and

FIG. 9 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the inner package as folded in FIG. 2.

Similar numerals refer to similar parts throughout the drawings.

As shown in FIG. 7, a closed package of surgical gloves is generally indicated at 1. The same package 1 is also shown in FIG. 1 in the open position with a pair of gloves 2 and 3 in place. The package 1 includes an inner wrapper or folder 4 and an outer wrapper or folder 5. The wrappers 4 and 5 are preferably composed of a material which is pervious to steam in order to permit the gloves to be sterilized in the package by steam, preferably in an autoclave, in a conventional manner.

For that purpose the material of the folders 4 and 5 should have the characteristics of stiffness and strength to permit handling after sterilizing without tearing the package open. Accordingly, the wrappers 4 and 5 may be composed of paper or other similar material.